United Nations A/58/415–S/2003/952

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.: General
7 October 2003

Original: English

General Assembly
Fifty-eighth session
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03-54691 (E) 211003

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Letter dated 3 October 2003 from the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour, in my capacity as Chairman of the Organization of the Islamic Conference Group in New York, to transmit herewith the final communiqué of the Annual Coordination Meeting of Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Member States of the Organization of the Islamic Countries, held at United Nations Headquarters in New York on 30 September 2003 (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would arrange for the present letter and its annex to be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 10, 11, 14, 23, 24, 28, 30, 35, 36, 37, 38, 40, 43, 44, 50, 55, 56, 57, 60, 70, 73, 76, 84, 91, 93, 95, 96, 98, 102, 103, 104, 112, 116, 117 and 156, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) M. Javad **Zarif**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

Annex to the letter dated 3 October 2003 from the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Final Communiqué of the Annual Coordination Meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Member States of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC)

United Nations – New York
4 Shaa'ban 1424 H
30 September 2003

**Final Communiqué of
the Annual Coordination Meeting
of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Member States of
the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC)**

**United Nations - New York
4 Shaa'ban 1424 H
30 September 2003**

The Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the OIC Member States held their Annual Coordination Meeting at the United Nations Headquarters in New York on 4 Shaa'ban 1424H (30 September 2003), under the chairmanship of His Excellency Dr. Javad Zarif, Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations, and adopted the following:

1. The Meeting *emphasized* its strong conviction about the significant role that the United Nations, as the only universal multilateral organization, can play in strengthening global coordination and cooperation in dealing with global challenges and threats, and *reaffirmed* the determination of the OIC Member States to actively work with the United Nations along this line in accordance with its Charter.

2. The Meeting *reaffirmed* its resolve to contribute effectively to the maintenance and promotion of regional and global peace and security, to preserve peace and security of all OIC Member States, to reject misinformation campaigns and threats against Islamic countries, and to extend full support and solidarity to Islamic countries facing external pressure, threats and interference in their domestic affairs in accordance with the United Nations Charter, and *called* for the settlement of disputes between States by dialogue on the basis of international law and the respect for the principles of sovereignty and non-interference in the internal affairs of the States.

3. The Meeting *underlined* the importance of dialogue, understanding and mutual respect among religions and cultures and stressed the need for a long term strategy which should aim at creating and promoting a culture of peace based on harmony and understanding across religious and cultural identities. In this regard, the Meeting *recalled* the initiatives from the Islamic world: Dialogue among Civilizations-Iran; Religious and Cultural Understanding, Harmony and Cooperation-Pakistan; International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World, 2001-2010-Bangladesh; Seminar on Islam and the West-Qatar.

4. The Meeting *welcomed* the proposal presented by President Pervez Musharaf of Pakistan for the strategy of "Enlightened Moderation" involving socio-economic and human development in the Islamic World, and simultaneous action by the international community, including the United Nations, to promote solutions to conflicts and disputes afflicting the Islamic World on the basis of justice and international law and legality, to prevent discrimination against Muslims and against their religion, Islam, and to support the development efforts of the Islamic countries.

5. The Meeting *reaffirmed* its support for the right of the Palestinian people to national independence and the exercise of sovereignty in their State, Palestine, with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its

capital. It *reaffirmed* the rights of the Palestine refugees in accordance with international law and General Assembly resolution 194(1948). The Meeting *reiterated* its solidarity with the Palestinian people in their struggle under their legitimate national leadership.

6. The Meeting *reaffirmed* the centrality of the cause of Al-Quds Al-Sharif for the whole Islamic Ummah. It affirmed the Arab nature of East Jerusalem and the need to defend the sanctity of Islamic holy places as well as Christian holy places. It reiterated its condemnation of Israeli attempts to change the status and the character of the City. It also *condemned* the recent Israeli provocations, such as the decision to allow by force the entry of non-Muslims, including hostile extremists, to Al-Haram Al-Sharif.

7. The Meeting *reaffirmed* its support for a comprehensive peace process, based on relevant United Nations resolutions, including Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973) and 1397(2002) as well as agreed principles, which call for Israel's complete withdrawal from the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including the City of Al-Quds Al-Sharif and all other occupied Arab territories. In this context, the Meeting *reiterated* its endorsement of the Arab Peace Initiative as approved by the Fourteenth Arab Summit, held in Beirut, Lebanon, on 28 March 2002.

8. The Meeting *also reiterated* its support to the efforts made by the Palestinian Authority in implementing the Road Map, and warned against Israeli acts aimed at derailing its implementation and even its destruction. It *called* upon the Quartet to increase its efforts to resuscitate the Road Map and to pursue its implementation towards its stated goals.

9. The Meeting strongly *condemned* Israeli policies and practices in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including Al-Quds Al-Sharif. It *condemned* in particular the willful killings of Palestinian civilians, including extra-judicial executions; the wanton destruction of homes, infrastructure and agricultural lands; the detention and imprisonment of thousands of Palestinians; and the imposition of collective punishment on the entire Palestinian population, including severe restrictions of the movement of persons of goods and prolonged curfews. The Meeting *reiterated* the legal obligations of the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention vis-à-vis the above-mentioned acts, in particular to those of constituting war crimes.

10. The Meeting also further strongly *condemned* the illegal Israeli policy and practice of settler colonialism, as well as the building of the expansionist wall, involving the confiscation of thousands of more dunums of Palestinian land, the isolation of dozens of Palestinian villages, towns and cities and the destruction of property and the livelihood of thousands of Palestinians.

11. The Meeting *directed* the Permanent Missions of the OIC Member States in New York to increase their efforts at the United Nations to uphold OIC positions on Palestine. It *called* for ensuring that the Israeli representation in the work of the United Nations General Assembly and international conferences be in conformity with international law, and that the Israeli credentials do not cover the territories occupied by Israel since 1967, including East Jerusalem.

12. The Meeting *condemned* the decision of the Israeli Government on 11 September 2003 to expel President Yasser Arafat, the elected President of Palestine. It *welcomed* the adoption on 19 September 2003 by the United Nations General Assembly of resolution ES-10/12, which demanded that Israel desist from any action of deportation, and to cease any threat to the safety of the elected President of the Palestinian Authority.

13. The Meeting also strongly *condemned* Israel's policy of refusing to comply with Security Council resolution 497 (1981) concerning the occupied Syrian Golan and its policies of annexation, building of colonial settlements, confiscation of land, diversion of water sources and imposition of Israeli nationality upon Syrian citizens. It also *demanded* Israel to completely withdraw from the occupied Syrian Golan to the June 4th, 1967 lines in accordance with Security Council resolutions 242(1967) and 338(1973), the principle of land for peace, the Madrid Peace Conference terms of reference and the Arab Peace Initiative, adopted by the Beirut Arab Summit.

14. The Meeting *supported* Lebanon in its efforts to complete the liberation of all its territories up to its internationally recognized borders, and *urged* the United Nations to compel Israel to pay reparations for all the losses it has inflicted, or caused, as a result of its persistent aggression against Lebanon. It further *supported* Lebanon in its demands for the removal of the mines left behind by the Israeli occupation, which is responsible for planting these mines and therefore for removing them. It also *supported* the inalienable rights of Lebanon to utilize its waters in accordance with international law and *condemned* Israel's designs on these waters. It *held* Israel responsible for any action such as infringing upon Lebanon's sovereignty, its political independence, the safety of its people, or the integrity of its territories.

15. The Meeting *urged* all parties directly concerned to consider seriously taking practical and urgent steps required for implementing the proposal to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the United Nations, and *warned* against the dire consequences of the continuing rejection of Israel to accede to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and to place promptly all its nuclear facilities under the full scope of the safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). In this regard, the Meeting *commended* the initiative presented by the Syrian Arab Republic to the Security Council on 16 April 2003 to establish a zone free from all weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East.

16. The Meeting *reaffirmed* the imperative of respect by all for the sovereignty, political independence, national unity and territorial integrity of Iraq. It *emphasized* the right of the Iraqi people to full control over their own natural resources and their right to freely establish a fully representative and broad-based government and the need to speedily restore the full Iraqi sovereignty, and *welcomed* the establishment of representative Governing Council of Iraq on 13 July 2003 and the Cabinet of Ministers, as important steps in this direction, and *underlined* the central role that the United Nations should play in post-war Iraq. In this vein, it *reiterated* its decision to have the permanent representatives of the OIC Member States at the United Nations in New York to monitor developments concerning Iraq, coordinate OIC's positions at the United Nations and prepare report thereof for onward submission to the Organization.

17. The Meeting *emphasized* the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of Iraq as well as the imperative for Iraq to maintain good relations with all its neighbors and to respect the existing treaties and agreements, especially those on internationally recognized boundaries.

18. The Meeting *underlined* the obligations of the occupying powers under international law, especially the Geneva Conventions of 1949, and *emphasized* in this regard the responsibility of the occupying powers to safeguard the civil and religious liberties of the Iraqi people and their cultural, religious, and historical heritage, and also *emphasized* the necessity for those powers to act in a manner that will ensure respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Iraq's neighboring States.

19. The Meeting *took note* of the relevant provisions of United Nations Security Council resolution 1483(2003) and accordingly *urged* the Member States to provide all forms of support and assistance to meet Iraq's needs and facilitate contributions and efforts designed to reactivate its organizational bodies, and economic institutions and infrastructures.

20. The Meeting *expressed* its strong condemnation of the terrorist criminal bomb attacks against the Jordanian Embassy and the Headquarters of the United Nations in Baghdad and the holy shrine in Najaf.

21. The Meeting *condemned* with deep sorrow and sadness the mass killing, as evidenced by the discovery of mass graves, perpetrated by the former regime of Iraq towards innocent Iraqi and Iranians and other nationals, in particular the killing of Kuwaiti POWs, which constitutes a crime against humanity and a grave violation of the provisions of international humanitarian law. The Meeting *called* for bringing to justice the officials of the former Iraqi regime who committed such crimes.

22. The Meeting *called upon* all the Member States to cooperate and to coordinate their efforts to combat the illegal trade and trafficking in Iraqi antiques, and help return those recovered to the Iraqi museums. It *welcomed* the findings of the recent report by the Arab Organization for Education, Science and Culture on the situation of Iraqi cultural and religious properties under foreign occupation.

23. The Meeting *reiterated* its support for the efforts undertaken by the Afghan Transitional Government to fully implement the Bonn Agreement as well as the recovery and reconstruction of Afghanistan. The Meeting *called upon* the international community to meet the most urgent needs of Afghanistan and to take the necessary steps towards fulfilling the commitments made at the Tokyo Conference on the Reconstruction of Afghanistan in 2002. It also *called upon* Member States to make donations to the OIC Fund set up to assist the Afghan people.

24. The Meeting *welcomed* the Kabul Declaration on Good Neighborly Relations of 22 December 2002. In accordance with this Declaration, the neighboring countries reaffirmed their commitment to constructive and supportive bilateral relationships based on the principles of territorial integrity, mutual respect, friendly relations, cooperation and non-interference in each other's internal affairs.

25. The Meeting *called upon* the United Nations Security Council to implement its relevant resolutions on Jammu and Kashmir enabling the Kashmiri people to determine their own future through a free and impartial referendum conducted under the auspices of the United Nations.

26. The Meeting *called* for a peaceful settlement of the question of Jammu and Kashmir in line with the relevant United Nations resolutions, and it also *called* for respect of human rights of the Kashmiri people and for an end to their continued violation. It *welcomed* the visit of the OIC Fact Finding Mission to Azad Jammu and Kashmir in April 2003, and urged India to allow visit by an OIC fact-finding mission to Jammu and Kashmir as well as provide access to international human rights organizations to verify the human rights situation in the Indian-held Kashmir.

27. The Meeting *welcomed* the measures taken by Pakistan and India to normalize their bilateral relations and urged India to enter into meaningful and result-oriented dialogue with Pakistan within the framework of the United Nations Security Council resolutions and the Simla Agreement to address the outstanding issues between the two countries, including the question of Jammu and Kashmir, which is the root cause of conflict between the two countries.

28. The Meeting *appealed* to the Transitional National Government of Somalia and to all Somali factions to renounce war and violence and to respond to the appeal to peace and serious participation in the on-going national dialogue for the reunification of the State and its reconstruction. The Meeting *urged* all States, particularly the neighbouring States, to respect the sovereignty of Somalia and not to intervene in its internal affairs. The Meeting further *underlined* the necessity for the participation of all Somali stakeholders in the peace process with a view to establishing an all -inclusive government for Somalia.

29. The Meeting *noted* with interest the information about the establishment of the OIC Fund for the rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts in Sierra Leone, and *expressed* the hope that the Member States will continue to contribute generously to the Fund. It also *expressed* the confidence that this initiative will suitably compliment the effort of the United Nations in bringing peace and stability in the country.

30. The Meeting *welcomed* the adoption of Security Council resolution no. 1506(2003) on 12 September 2003, by which the sanctions imposed on Libya have been lifted. It *commended* the constructive efforts that Libya undertook in order to reach this positive result. In this regard, it further *demanded* the lifting of other unilateral sanctions unjustly imposed on Libya, and *supported* Libya's right to demand a fair compensation for the human and material damages resulting from these sanctions.

31. The Meeting *called* on those States that have imposed arbitrary or unilateral political, legal, economic and other measures upon any OIC Member States to end such measures as they contravene the objectives and principles of the United Nations Charter and of the international law.

32. The Meeting *reaffirmed* its solidarity with the Republic of the Sudan in confronting hostile designs and *commended* the Sudanese Government for its continued efforts to reach a peaceful

solution to the problem of southern Sudan through negotiations with the various Sudanese parties. The Meeting also *emphasized* the unity and integrity of the Republic of the Sudan and its sovereignty within its internationally recognized borders.

33. The Meeting *reiterated* its condemnation of the aggression of the Republic of Armenia against the Republic of Azerbaijan, which constitutes a blatant violation of the United Nations Charter and international law. It *called for* total withdrawal of the occupation forces of Armenia from all occupied Azerbaijani territories. It also *called upon* Armenia to implement fully other provisions of United Nations Security Council resolutions 822, 853, 874 and 884 of 1993. It *invited* the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) to implement its own decisions on the resolution of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict as adopted at the Budapest and Lisbon Summits (1994 and 1996) and to bring an end to the conflict in accordance with the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter and international law.

34. The Meeting *expressed* its support for the rightful cause of the Muslim Turkish Cypriots, and *hailed* the efforts made by the United Nations Secretary-General towards the achievement of a negotiated and just settlement based on the principle of parity and equality between the two parties in Cyprus. In the same vein, it also *joined* the United Nations Secretary-General in welcoming measures taken by the Turkish Cypriot side, which has created a positive atmosphere in the Island.

35. The Meeting *expressed* satisfaction with the commencement of the activities of the OIC Trust Fund for the urgent Return of Refugees to Bosnia and Herzegovina. It also *commended* those Member States that have contributed to the Fund and *called* on others to do so.

36. The Meeting *reviewed* the voting pattern of the OIC Member States in the United Nations bodies on the Palestinian and Middle Eastern questions and other issues of concern and interest to OIC Member States, and *stressed* the need to participate more actively in future voting processes, in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the OIC Summit and Ministerial Conferences.

37. The Meeting *reaffirmed* that OIC Member States have a direct interest in the reform of the United Nations System, including the expansion of the Security Council. It *reiterated* its resolve to take an active part in that process in accordance with relevant declarations and statements of the OIC.

38. The Meeting *reaffirmed* the imperative of promoting multilateral diplomacy in resolving disarmament and non-proliferation concerns, and, in this context, *underlined* that multilateral institutions established under the auspices of the United Nations are the sole legitimate bodies to verify and ensure compliance with relevant international agreements.

39. The Meeting *reaffirmed* its resolve to combat all forms and manifestations of terrorism, including state terrorism, and its determination to participate in the multilateral global efforts to eradicate this menace, *rejected* selectivity and double standards in combating terrorism, and any attempts to link terrorism to a specific religion or culture. It also *reiterated* its support for the convening of an international conference under the aegis of the United Nations to define terrorism and stress the need for efforts to be exerted to conclude a convention on international terrorism that would differentiate

between terrorism and legitimate struggle of peoples under colonial or alien domination and foreign occupation for self-determination in accordance with the United Nations Charter and international law. The Meeting *reaffirmed* that situations of foreign occupation are governed by international humanitarian law and not by conventions on terrorism. It also *called upon* all Member States, who have not done so, to take the necessary steps towards the ratification of the OIC Convention on Combating International Terrorism.

40. The Meeting *recalled* the decisions adopted by the Thirteenth Summit of Non-Aligned Countries, held in Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia), and the Second Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the African Union, held in Maputo (Mozambique), regarding Tunisia's proposal to elaborate by consensus an international counter-terrorism code of conduct within the framework of the United Nations. The Meeting *endorsed* this initiative and appealed to all Member States of the United Nations and international organizations to support it and contribute to its realization when it is tabled before the United Nations General Assembly.

41. The Meeting *welcomed* the increased cooperation between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and *encouraged* Iran to continue this cooperation. It *regretted* that the divergent views in this issue could not be consolidated in a consensus resolution at the recent meeting of the IAEA Board of Governors. The Meeting *took note* of different interpretation of different paragraphs of the resolution, particularly on operative paragraph 4, and *believed* that putting the deadline at the end of October would tie the Agency's hand. The Meeting stressed that the Board resolution should not forestall or hinder the process before or after November 2003, and *invited* all States to assist the IAEA Director-General to establish a framework of cooperation, in consultation with Iran, to bring all outstanding issues to a closure.

42. The Meeting *expressed* its determination to vigorously pursue the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms and *encouraged* greater transparency, cooperation, mutual tolerance and respect for religious values and cultural diversity in the field of universal promotion and protection of human rights. It also *reiterated* the necessity of following up on the Cairo Declaration on Human Rights in Islam, and *called upon* all the Member States to continue their coordination and cooperation in the area of human rights in the relevant international fora with the view to enhance Islamic solidarity in confronting attempts to use human rights as a means to politically pressurize any of the Member States.

43. The Meeting *reiterated* its appeal to all Member States, international Organizations, and the representatives of private sector and civil society, to contribute to the preparatory process of the World Summit on the Information Society, to be held in two phases, the first in Geneva in 2003, the second in Tunis in November 2005, and *underlined* the role that the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) should play to ensure the visibility needed for this important event, and the mobilization of the required resources in order to ensure its success. The Meeting *took note* with satisfaction of the measures taken in order to assure an harmonious linkage between the two phases of the Summit, and invited the Member States and the representatives of the private sector to contribute to the Special Trust Fund established by the ITU in order to facilitate the organization of meetings of the Preparatory

Committee, prior to the Tunis phase, and to ensure the participation of developing countries, in particular the least developed countries in this process.

44. The Meeting *recalled* paragraph 126 of the Final Communiqué of the Thirtieth Session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers, which supported the Tunisian initiative to declare an international year for sports and physical education for peace and development.

45. The Meeting *reaffirmed* the need to strengthen the role and capacity of the United Nations system to assist developing countries to achieve the internationally-agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration.

46. The Meeting *emphasized* the need for the promotion of the *new global human order* aimed at reversing the growing disparity between the rich and poor, both among and within countries through, inter alia, the eradication of poverty, the promotion of sustainable development, and the realization of the just aspirations of all peoples.

47. The Meeting *reiterated* that the pursuance of sustainable development should be the priority of all countries through the implementation of all internationally-agreed development goals and objectives, including those contained in the Johannesburg Plan of Action, Monterey Consensus and the Millennium Declaration, and *stressed* that the multilateral trading and financial systems should be open, equitable, rule-based and non-discriminatory. In this context, it *urged* the international community to facilitate the accession of those OIC Member States that seek to join the World Trade Organization on fair terms, irrespective of political considerations.

48. The Meeting *reaffirmed* that the previously held major United Nations conferences and summits resulted in the establishment of a solid repertoire of commitments for the attainment of sustainable development goals and targets. The Meeting *welcomed* in this regard the adoption by the United Nations General Assembly on 20 December 2002 of resolution 57/270 on integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic and social fields, and *urged* the international community, particularly donor countries, to ensure an effective and durable implementation of these commitments through the provision of reliable means of implementation, particularly to developing countries.

49. The Meeting *welcomed* the initiative of the Kingdom of Morocco to convene in Marrakech from 16 to 19 December 2003 a high-level conference on South-South cooperation, which would reinforce and strengthen the solidarity between developing countries, including among OIC Members States.

50. The Meeting *welcomed* the adoption of the United Nations General Assembly resolution 57/337 of 3 July 2003 on the "Prevention of Armed Conflict", which reaffirmed the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force and the need to bring an end to situations of foreign occupation as a manifestation by the international community to the culture of conflict prevention.

51. The Meeting *called on* United Nations Member States for the full implementation of the resolutions and the decisions of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

(UNESCO) concerning the return of cultural properties to the peoples who were or still under colonial rule or occupation. It also *stressed* the need for UNESCO to identify the stolen or illegally exported cultural properties in accordance with the relevant conventions on the subject. It *emphasized* the need to expedite the process of returning these properties to their countries of origin, in compliance with the resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly. It further *emphasized* the right of the Islamic countries to maintain and conserve their national heritage, as it constitutes the foundation of the cultural identity of these countries.

52. The Meeting *took note*, with appreciation, of the ongoing preparations for the Tenth Session of the Islamic Summit Conference to be held in Putrajaya, Malaysia, from 11 to 18 October 2003, and *looked forward* to the participation of OIC Member States in the Summit towards strengthening the Organization and enhancing its influence and effective contribution in world affairs.

53. The Meeting *took note* of the interim report of the first meeting of the OIC Senior Intergovernmental Expert Group, held on 1-3 September 2003 in Jeddah, regarding the rationalization of the OIC agenda items and the operationalization of its resolutions, and *looked forward* to the further deliberations of the Expert Group.

54. The Meeting *expressed* appreciation and satisfaction for the excellent performance of the Permanent Observer Mission of the OIC to the United Nations in New York in discharging its duties in conformity with the resolutions of the OIC Summit and Ministerial Conferences.

55. The Meeting *adopted* the reports issued by:

1- The Six-Member Committee on Palestine.
2- The Ad-Hoc Committee on Afghanistan.
3- The Contact Group on Somalia.
4- The Contact Group on Sierra Leone.
5- The Contact Group on Jammu and Kashmir.

New York: 4 Shaa'ban 1424H
30 September 2003